It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well. —*The Bhagavad-Gita*

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THE PROMETHEAN PROMISE

> . . . the Host that incarnated in a portion of humanity, though led to it by Karma or *Nemesis,* preferred free-will to passive slavery, intellectual self-conscious pain and even torture—"while myriad time shall flow"—to inane, imbecile, instinctual beatitude. Knowing such an incarnation was premature and not in the programme of nature, the heavenly host, "Prometheus," still sacrificed itself to benefit thereby, at least, one portion of mankind. But while saving man from mental darkness, they inflicted upon him the tortures of the self-consciousness of his responsibility—the result of his free will—besides every ill to which mortal man and flesh are heir to. This torture Prometheus accepted for himself, since the Host became henceforward blended with the tabernacle prepared for them, which was still unachieved at that period of formation.
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> Spiritual evolution being incapable of keeping pace with the physical, once its homogeneity was broken by the admixture, the gift thus became the chief cause, if not the sole origin of *Evil.*
>
> —*The Secret Doctrine* II, 421

HERE lies the foundation of the true psychotherapy of the future. The disorders of the mind and the emotions, so prevalent today, are all rooted in what H.P.B. seems to describe as the unequal struggle of an order of spiritual beings who suffer confinement in bodies which were occupied while still raw and undeveloped to the point required by the needs of the incarnating host. A little earlier in the text H.P.B. says that the gift of Prometheus thus became a *curse,* although even this was foreknown and foreseen.

What was the "supreme consolation" of Prometheus? He found the capacity to endure his pain because "the divine Titan is moved by altruism," while "the mortal man by Selfishness and Egotism in every instance."

One might say that a "final explanation" of our psychological troubles is still withheld from us, since there must have been a "cause" for the inadequacy of the vehicles prepared for the *Manasa,* but it is nonetheless an enormous help to understand that the ordeal of self-consciousness arises from an ancient acceptance of it, and that it was undertaken in behalf of the evolutionary progress of mankind.

The fundamental instruction, here, is that it is *in the nature of being human* to bear the frightful pangs of loneliness, to endure the gnawing of desire, to seek in the dark for a sense of spiritual reality, and to suffer all the dissimulations which the magic of nature imposes on the faltering perceptions of our imperfect vehicles. The task is one for heroes, not saints, even though a kind of saintliness may be a by-product of its accomplishment. As *The Voice of the Silence* says:

> Non-permanence of human action; deliverance of mind from thralldom by the cessation of sin and faults, are not for "Deva-Egos." Thus saith the "doctrine of the Heart."

The Promethean engagement, in short, is with matter, in order that matter may be changed into something else. And for spirit to live within the empire of matter brings those consequences of which H.P.B. speaks, which must be lived out—*exhausted*—in the mind. What is wanted, for individual release, is a taste for endlessness. But what is needed for all is self-knowledge—the emancipating certainty that we are what we are, potential divinities on a mission of brotherhood and liberation.

One sees already, in the intuitive longings which appear in European and American literature, whether of science, religion, or poetry, the evidences of a groping self-knowledge. The stark, unbending declarations of the Existentialists concerning the dignity of man have in them lonely strands of egoic memory. Tortured attempts, too soon comprised, to reconstruct the foundations of religion, originate deep in some Promethean intuition. The love and celebration of freedom—that most misunderstood of human ideals—gives unceasing testimony to the reality of spiritual man.

For everyone, whatever his egoic alliances, the quest for self-knowledge is a struggle. Feelings of guilt haunt the wise as well as the foolish; yearnings beset the strong as well as the weak, and disappointments and frustrations are singularly impartial in their pursuit of human beings. But what if we *know*—or enjoy a clear opportunity of knowing—what these concomitants of being human represent? What if we have been given undoubted clues to the real, as distinguished from the unreal, in our shadowed, subjective encounters? How much is it to know, whatever may come, that a man never has sufficient reason to *give up?*

There are different kinds and degrees of darkness. There are different species of hope, and the one may thrive on the dying out of the other. It is philosophy which instructs us in these differences, and while a thought is not an act, there are some acts—the most important of all—which are not possible without preliminary deliberation.

So, it is one thing to struggle on by oneself, alone, and to be continually smitten by those misgivings which arise in mortality and can give promise of only the lot of mortality; and it is another thing to work out one's destiny in the light of a heaven-born wisdom which, while not yet ours, has belonged to those who were once like ourselves in every respect.

Altruism, self-forgetfulness, working for others, cleaving to the Real, placing truth before all else—these are the keys to the strength that endures through all personal problems and complaints, and gives, finally, that immunity to weakness and temptation which belongs to regenerated Promethean man. These are not merely moral "oughts," but the qualities of egoity, after it has seen through the glamour of physical existence and is fascinated no more by the screen of time. The Promethean destiny is described by H.P.B.:

> Man will rebecome the *free* Titan of old, but not before cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures—the terrestrial and the divine; after which he becomes impermeable to the lower titanic forces, invulnerable in his personality, and immortal in his individuality, which cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from his nature.

ON THE FUTURE: A FEW REFLECTIONS

ALTHOUGH I am an American citizen, the place of my birth was in Ireland, and in what I am about to say I cannot be accused of Columbiamania, for no matter how long might be my life I could never be an American. For that perhaps it is right, since it is compulsory, to wait for some distant incarnation.

Now, either H.P.B. was right or she was wrong in what she says in *The Secret Doctrine* about the future of America. If wrong, then all this may be dismissed as idle speculation. But, if right, then all thoughtful Theosophists must take heed, weigh well, mentally appropriate and always remember what are her words as well as the conclusions to which they lead.

In the first pages of the second volume she speaks of five great Continents. *First,* the Imperishable Sacred Land [this is at the North Pole, W.Q.J.]; *second,* the Hyperborean, now part of it is in Northern Asia; *third,* Lemuria, sunk long ago, but leaving some remains, islands, the points of high mountain ranges; *fourth,* Atlantis, presumably in the Atlantic Ocean, now below the level of water, but with perhaps Teneriffe and Atlas as reminders; and *fifth,* "was America."

From a survey of the book, digging in notes and culling from the text here and there, the conclusion is irresistible that, although the present America is not the actual Continent *as it is to be,* it is a portion of it; and certainly is now the nursery for the race that will in the future occupy the *sixth* Continent, which for the sixth Great Root-Race will emerge from the waters. Where? Perhaps when the present America has been split up by tremendous cataclysms, leaving here and there large pieces on its western side, it is in the Pacific Ocean that the great mass of the new one will come up from the long sleep below the sea. Rightly then will the great far western ocean have been named *Pacific,* for that Race will not be given to contest nor hear of wars or rumors of war, since it will be too near

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NOTE.—This article was first published in *Lucifer,* March, 1892.

the seventh, whose mission it must be to attain to the consummation, to seize and hold the Holy Grail.

Turn to page 444 and onward of the second volume. Read there that the Americans have become in only three hundred years a primary race *pro tem,* in short, the germs of the sixth sub-race, to blossom in a few more centuries into the pioneers of that one which must succeed to the present European fifth sub-race in all its characteristics. Then after about 25,000 years, which you will note is meant for a great sidereal cycle of a little over that length of time, this new race will prepare for the seventh sub-race. Cataclysms will then fall upon you; lands and nations will be swept away, first of all being the European, including the British Isles—if not gone before—and then parts of both North and South America. And how puny, mongrel, indeed, will be the remains of the scientists of today, great masters of microbes now, but then to be looked upon as strange remains of the Nineteenth Century, when, as the people will tell each other then, so many, with Truth before them, laughed at it and stoned its apostles, dancing a fantastic dance meanwhile around the altar of invisible matter.

It seems as if some power, deliberately planning, had selected North and South America for the place where a new primary root-race should be begun. These two continents were evidently the seats of ancient races and not the habitat of wild undeveloped man. The red man of the Northern one has all the appearance and beliefs of a once great race. He believes in one God, a Devachan of happy hunting after death. Some tribes have diagrams of how the world was formed and peopled, that strangely resemble the Hindu cosmogony, and their folklore bears deep marks of having come down from an older and better time. Following the course of exploration southwards, we find accumulating evidences all the way of a prior civilization now gone with the cyclic wave which brought it up. Central America is crowded with remains in stone and brick! and so on south still we discover similar proofs. In course of time these continents became what might be called arable land, lying waiting, recuperating, until the European streams of men began to pour upon it. The Spanish overflowed South America and settled California and Mexico; the English, French, and Spanish took the North, and later all nations came, so that now in both continents nearly every race is mixed and still mixing. Chinese even have married women of European blood; Hindus are also here; the ancient Parsi race

has its representatives; the Spanish mixed with the aborigines, and the slaveholders with the Africans. I doubt not but that some one from every race known to us has been here and has left, within the last two hundred years, some impression through mixture of blood.

But the last remnants of the fifth Continent, America, will not disappear until the new race has been some time born. Then a new Dwelling, the sixth Continent, will have appeared over the waters to receive the youth who will tower above us as we do above the pigmies of Africa. But no America as we now know it will exist. Yet these men must be the descendants of the race that is now rising here. Otherwise our philosophy is all wrong. So then, in America now is forming the new sub-race, and in this land was founded the present Theosophical Society; two matters of great importance. It was to the United States, observe, that the messenger of the Masters came, although Europe was just as accessible for the enterprise set on foot. Later, this messenger went to India and then to Europe, settling down in the British Isles. All of this is of importance in our reflections. For why in America at first does she begin the movement, and why end her part of it in England? One might be led to ask why was not an effort made at all costs to give the last impulse outwardly in the land of promise where she began the work?

Do not imagine for one moment, O ye English brothers of mine, that London was selected for this because the beauties of your island called her, or for that she had decided at the finish that after all a mistake had been made in not going there first. It was all out of stern necessity, with a wisdom derived from many older heads, having in view the cycles as they sweep resistlessly forward. The point where the great energy is started, the centre of force, is more important, and not the place at which it is ended. And this remains true, no matter how essential the place of ending may be in the scheme. What, do you suppose India is not as important? and would not that land have offered seemingly a better spot than all for the beginning of the *magnum opus?* Adepts do not make mistakes like that.

America's discovery is ascribed to Christopher Columbus. Although it is doubted, yet no one doubts that the Spanish people did the most at first in peopling it, meanwhile working off some old and making some new Karma, by killing many of the aborigines. Thus it is that doomed people rush on to their doom, even as the troops of insects, animals and men were seen by Arjuna to rush into Krish-

na's flaming mouths. But later the sturdy stock from England, who, in the greatest nation, the most enduring on this continent, have left their impress indelibly in the people, in its laws, in its constitution, its customs, its literature and language. Perhaps England and Ireland are the gateways for the Egos who incarnate here in the silent work of making a new race. Maybe there is some significance in the fact that more lines of steamships conveying human freight come to the United States from England, passing Ireland on the way as the last seen land of the old world, than from anywhere else. The deeds of men, the enterprises of merchants, and the wars of soldiers all follow implicitly a law that is fixed in the stars, and while they copy the past they ever symbolize the future.

Did H.P.B. only joke when she wrote in her book that Ireland is an ancient Atlantean remnant, and England a younger Isle, whose rising from the sea was watched by wise men from Erin's shore? Perhaps the people of that old land may have an important influence in the new race of America. It would appear from comparison that they might have had, and probably will in the future. Perhaps, politically, since many expect social disturbances in America. In such a case any student of character will admit that the Irish, ignorant or not, will stand for law and order—for her sons are not battling here with an ancient foe. Why, too, by strange freak of fate is the great stone of destiny in Westminster Abbey fixed under the coronation chair on which the Queen was crowned? Let us also be informed if there be any finger-shadow pointing to the future in the fact that England's Queen, crowned over that stone,[1] is Empress of India, from which we claim the Aryans came, and where their glorious long-forgotten knowledge is preserved? Her name is Victory. It is the victory for "the new order of Ages"; and that new order began in America, its advent noted and cut on the as yet unused obverse side of the present seal of the United States Government.[2] A victory in the union of the Egos from East and West; for England stretches one hand over to the home of the new race, which she can never own, with the other governing India and completes the circuit. It may be a fleeting picture, perhaps to be wiped out for a while in a stream of blood, but such is the way the cycles

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[1] It is an interesting fact that in India there is an important ceremony called "mounting the stone."

[2] Now in use, since 1935, notably on the U.S. dollar bill. For more about the seal, see Mr. Judge's article, "The Adepts in America in 1776," reprinted in THEOSOPHY 21:390. —Eds. THEOSOPHY

roll and how we may learn to read the future. For England's destiny is not complete, nor has the time struck. None of us hug foolish delusions too long, and even if Ireland were once a most sacred place, that is no reason why we should want to go there. For in America those whose Karma has led them there will work for the same end and brotherhood as others left in India and Europe. The dominant language and style of thought in America is English, albeit transforming itself every day. It is there that silently the work goes on; there European fathers and mothers have gone, establishing currents of attraction that will inevitably and unceasingly draw into reincarnation Egos similar to themselves. And the great forward and backward rush is completed by the retarded Egos as they die out of other nations, coming meanwhile into flesh again among the older races left behind.

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At least such seemed the view while the clouds lifted—and then once more there was silence.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, F.T.S.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF WORTH

Just as in physical life, too hot or too cold are equally fatal, so too much want is as destructive as too little. Society still has far to go to achieve that degree of economic well-being in which, while man must work to live, life for many is not so difficult as to discourage a search for enduring values. It is well for the approach to utopia to be uninterrupted, for time not spent in motion is time lost, and it may be death.

Given a state of society in which there is neither satiety nor extreme want, if the energies and interests of men should come to be focussed on achievements of imperishable worth, instead of being consumed in conflict with each other or with external nature, each decade might see as great progress toward the goal as does a century today. The way at best will be long and difficult, yet it is faith that the potential values of life are worth living and working for which gives courage, hope, and enthusiasm to thinking men.

—ARTHUR E. MORGAN

THE WISDOM RELIGION

Church and Masonry II

UP to the fourth century the churches knew of no altars. Up to that date the altar was a *table* raised in the middle of the temple, for purposes of *Communion,* or fraternal repasts (the *Cœna,* as mass was originally said in the evening). In the same way now the table is raised in the "Lodge" for Masonic Banquets, which usually close the proceedings of a Lodge and at which the resurrected Hiram Abifs, the "Widow's Sons," honour their toasts by *firing,* a Masonic mode of transubstantiation. Shall we call their banquet tables *altars* also? Why not? The altars were copies from the *ara maxima* of pagan Rome. The Latins placed square and oblong stones near the tombs, and called them *ara,* altar; they were consecrated to the gods *Lares* and *Manes.* Our altars are a derivation from these square stones, another form of the boundary stones known as the gods *Termini*—the Hermeses, and the Mercuries, whence *Mercurius quadratus, quadriceps, quadrifrons,* etc., etc., the *four-faced* gods, whose symbols these square stones were, from the highest antiquity. The stone on which the ancient kings of Ireland were crowned was such an "altar." Such a stone is in Westminster Abbey, endowed, moreover, with a voice. Thus our altars and thrones descend directly from the priapic boundary stones of the pagans—the gods *termini.*

Shall the church-going reader feel very indignant if he is told that the Christians adopted the *pagan* way of worshipping *in a temple,* only during the reign of Diocletianus? Up to that period they had an insurmountable horror for altars and temples, and held them in abomination for the first 250 years of our era. These primitive Christians were Christians indeed; the moderns are more pagan than any ancient idolators. The former were the *Theosophists* of those days; from fourth century they became Helleno-Judaic Gentiles *minus* the philosophy of the Neo-Platonists. Read what Minutius Felix says in the third century to the Romans:

Note.—This series began in the November, 1966, issue. Material in this article is taken from "The Roots of Ritualism in Church and Masonry," by H. P. Blavatsky.

> You fancy that we (Christians) conceal that which we worship because *we will have neither temples nor altars?* But what image of God shall we raise, since Man is himself God's image? What temple can we build to the Deity, when the Universe, which is Its work, can hardly contain It? How shall we enthrone the power of such Omnipotence in a single building? Is it not far better to consecrate to the Deity a temple in our heart and spirit?

But then the *Chres*tians of the type of Minutius Felix had in their mind the commandment of the MASTER-INITIATE, *not to pray in the synagogues and temples* as the *hypocrites* do, "that they may be seen of men." (Matthew 6:5.) They remembered the declaration of Paul, the Apostle-Initiate, the "Master Builder" (I Corinthians 3:10), that MAN was the one temple of God, in which the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God dwelleth; (*Ibid*). They obeyed the truly Christian precepts, whereas the modern Christians obey but the arbitrary canons of their respective churches, and the rules of their Elders. "Theosophists are notorious Atheists," exclaims a writer in the "Church Chronicle." "Not one of them is ever known to attend divine service . . . the Church is obnoxious to them"; and forthwith uncorking the vials of his wrath, he pours out their contents on the *infidel, heathen* F.T.S. The modern Churchman stones the Theosophist as his ancient forefather, the Pharisee of the "Synagogue of the Libertines" (*Acts* 6:9) stoned Stephen, for saying that which even many Christian Theosophists say, namely that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (*Ibid,* 48); and they "suborn men" just as these iniquitous judges did (*Ibid,* II) to testify against us.

Forsooth, friends, you are indeed the righteous descendants of your predecessors, whether of the colleagues of Saul, or of those of Pope Leo X, the cynical author of the ever famous sentence: "How useful to us this *fable* of Christ!"

The "Solar Myth" theory has become in our day stale—*ad nauseam*—repeated as we hear it from the four cardinal points of Orientalism and Symbolism, and applied indiscriminately to all things and all religions, except Church Christianity and state-religion. No doubt the Sun was throughout the whole antiquity and since days immemorial the symbol of the Creative Deity—with every nation, not with the Parsis alone; but so he is with the Ritualists. As in days of old, so it is now. Our central star is the "Father" for the *pro-fanes,* the Son of the ever unknowable Deity for the Epoptai.

Says the . . . Mason, Ragon, "the Sun was the most sublime and natural image of the GREAT ARCHITECT, as the most ingenious of all the allegories under which the moral and good man (the *true sage*) had ever endowed infinite and limitless *Intelligence*." Apart from the latter assumption, Ragon is right; for he shows this symbol gradually receding from the ideal so represented and conceived, and becoming finally from a symbol the original, in the minds of his ignorant worshippers. Then the great Masonic author proves that it is the *physical* Sun which was regarded as both the Father and the Son by the early Christians.

> Oh, initiated Brethren [he exclaims], can you forget that in the temples of the existing religion a large *lamp* burns night and day? It is suspended in front of the chief altar, the depository of the ark of the Sun. Another *lamp* burning before the altar of the virgin-mother is the emblem of the light of the *moon*. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us that the Egyptians were the first to establish the religious use of the lamps. . . . Who does not know that the most sacred and terrible duty was entrusted to the Vestals? If the Masonic temples are lighted with three astral lights, the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *geometrical star*, and with three vital lights, this Hierophant and his two *Episcopes* (Wardens, in French *Surveillants*), it is because one of the Fathers of Masonry, the learned Pythagoras, ingenuously suggests that we should not speak of divine things without a light. Pagans celebrated a festival of lamps called *Lampadophorics* in honour of Minerva, Prometheus, and Vulcan. But Lactantius and some of the earliest fathers of the new faith complained bitterly of this pagan introduction of lamps in the Churches; "If they deigned," writes Lactantius, "*to contemplate that light which we call the* SUN, they would soon recognize that *God has no need of their lamps*." And Vigilantius adds "Under the pretext of religion the Church established a Gentile custom of lighting vile candles, while the SUN is there illuminating us with a thousand lights. *Is it not a great honour* for the LAMB OF GOD (the sun thus represented), *which placed in the middle of the throne* (the universe) *fills it with the radiance of his Majesty?*" Such passages prove to us that in those days the primitive Church worshipped THE GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE WORLD in its image the SUN, sole of its kind. (*The Mass and its Mysteries*, pp. 19 and 20.)

Indeed, while Christian candidates have to pronounce the Masonic oath turned to the East and that their "Venerable" keeps in the Eastern corner, because the Neophytes were made to do the same during the Pagan Mysteries, the Church has, in her turn, preserved the identical rite. During the High Mass, the High-Altar (*ara-maxima*) is ornamented with the Tabernacle, or the pyx (the box

in which the HOST is kept), and with six lighted tapers. The esoteric meaning of the pyx and contents—the symbol of the Christ-Sun—is that it represents the resplendent luminary, and the six tapers the six planets (the early Christians knowing of no more), three on his right and three on his left. This is a copy of the seven-branched candlestick of the synagogue, which has an identical meaning, *"Sol est Dominus Meus"* "the Sun is my Lord!" exclaims David in Psalm 95, translated very ingeniously in the authorized version by "The Lord is a great God," "a great King *above* all Gods" (v.3), or planets truly! Augustin Chalis is more sincere in his *Philosophie des Religions Compareés* (Vol. II, p. 18), when he writes:

> All are devs (demons), on this Earth, save the God of the Seers (Initiates) the sublime IAO; and *if in Christ you see aught than* the SUN, then you adore a *dev,* a phantom such as are all the children of night.

The East being the cardinal point whence arises the luminary of the Day, the great giver and sustainer of life, the creator of all that lives and breathes on this globe, what wonder if all the nations of the Earth worshipped in him the visible agent of the invisible Principle and Cause; and that *mass* should be said in the honour of him who is the giver of *messis* or "harvest." But between worshipping the ideal as a *whole,* and the physical symbol, a part chosen to represent that whole and the ALL, there is an abyss. For the learned Egyptian, the Sun was the "eye" of Osiris, not Osiris himself; the same for the learned Zoroastrians. For the early Christians the Sun became *the* Deity, *in toto;* and by dint of casuistics, sophistry, and dogmas not to be questioned, the modern Christian churches have contrived to force even the educated world to accept the same, while hypnotising it into a belief that *their* god is the one living true Deity, the maker of, *not the Sun*—a demon worshipped by the "heathen." But what may be the difference between a wicked demon, and the anthropomorphic God, *e.g.,* as represented in Solomon's Proverbs? That "God," unless poor, helpless, ignorant men call upon him, when their "fear cometh as desolation" and their "destruction as a whirlwind," threatens them in such words as these: "I will *laugh* at your calamities, I will *mock* when your fear cometh!" (Prov. 1:26-27.) Identify this God with the great Avatar on whom the Christian legend is hung; make him one with that true Initiate who said, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted": and what is the result? Such identification alone is quite sufficient to

justify the fiendish joy of Tertullian, who laughed and rejoiced at the idea of his *infidel* next of kin roasting in hell-fire; the advice of Hieronymus to the Christian convert to trample over the body of his pagan mother, if she seeks to prevent him *leaving her for ever* to follow Christ; and it makes of all the Church tyrants, murderers, and *omnes gentes* of the Inquisition, the grandest and noblest exemplars of *practical* Christianity that have ever lived!

Vanitas vanitatum! nothing is new under the sun. The "Litanies of the Virgin Mary" prove it in the sincerest way. Pope Gregory I introduces the *worship* of the Virgin Mary and the Chalcedonian Council proclaim her the mother of God. But the author of the *Litanies* had not even the decency (or is it the brains?) to furnish her with any other than pagan adjectives and titles, as I shall presently show. Not a symbol, not a metaphor of this famous Litany but belonged to a crowd of goddesses; all Queens, Virgins, or Mothers; these three titles applying to Isis, Rhea, Cybele, Diana, Lucifera, Lucina, Luna, Tellus, Latona *tri-formis,* Proserpina, Hecate, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, Leucothea, Astarte, *celestial* Cenus and Urania, *Alma Venus,* etc., etc., etc.

Besides the primitive signification of trinity (the *esoteric,* or that of Father, Mother, Son) does not this Western *trimurti* (three faces) mean in the masonic pantheon *"Sun, Moon,* and the *Venerable"?* a slight alteration, forsooth, from the Germanic and Northern *Fire, Sun* and *Moon.*

It is the intimate knowledge of this, perchance, that made the Mason, J. M. Ragon, describe his profession of faith thus:

> For me *the Son is the same as Horus, son of Osiris and Isis;* he is the SUN who, *every year redeems the world from sterility* and *the universal death of the races.*

And he goes on to speak of the Virgin Mary's particular litanies, temples, festivals, masses and Church services, pilgrimages, oratories, Jacobins, Franciscans, vestals, prodigies, *ex voto,* niches, statues, etc., etc., etc.

De Maleville, a great Hebrew scholar and translator of Rabbinical literature, observes that the Jews give to the moon all those names which, in the *Litanies,* are used to glorify the Virgin. He finds in the *Litanies of Jesus* all the attributes of Osiris—the Eternal Sun, and of Horus, the Annual Sun. And he proves it.

Mater Christi is the mother of the Redeemer of the old Masons,

who is the *Sun*. The *hoi polloi* among the Egyptians, claimed that the child, symbol of the great central star, *Horus,* was the Son of *Osireth* and *Oseth,* whose souls had *ensouled,* after their death, the *Sun* and the *Moon*. *Isis* became, with the Phœnicians, *Astarte,* the names under which they adored the Moon, personified as a woman adorned with horns, which symbolised the crescent. Astarte was represented at the autumnal equinox after her husband's (the Sun's) defeat by the Prince of Darkness and descent into Hades, as weeping over the loss of her consort, who is also her son, as Isis does that of her consort, brother and son (Osiris-Horus). Astarte holds in her hand a cruciform stick, a regular cross, and stands weeping on the crescent moon. The Christian Virgin Mary is often represented in the same way, standing on the new moon, surrounded by stars and weeping for her son *juxta crucem lacrymosa dum pendebat filius* (*Vide Stabat Mater Dolorosa*). Is not she the heiress of Isis and Astarte? asks the author.

Truly, and you have but to repeat the *Litany to the Virgin* of the R. Catholic Church, to find yourself repeating ancient incantations to *Adonaïa* (Venus), the mother of Adonis, the Solar god of so many nations; to *Mylitta* (the Assyrian Venus), goddess of nature; to *Alilat,* whom the Arabs symbolized by the two lunar horns; to *Selene,* wife and sister of *Helion,* the Sun god of the Greeks; or, to the *Magna Mater, . . . honestissima, purissima, castissima,* the Universal Mother of all Beings—because SHE IS MOTHER NATURE.

Verily is *Maria* (Mary) the Isis *Myrionymos,* the Goddess Mother of the ten thousand names! As the Sun was *Phœbus,* in heaven, so he became *Apollo,* on earth, and Pluto in the still lower regions (after sunset); so the moon was *Phœbe* in heaven, and *Diana,* on earth (*Gæa, Latona, Ceres*); becoming *Hecate* and *Proserpine* in Hades. Where is the wonder then, if Mary, is called *regina virginum,* "Queen of Virgins," and *castissima* (most chaste), when even the prayers offered to her at the sixth hour of the morning and the evening are copied from those sung by the "heathen" Gentiles *at the same hours* in honour of *Phœbe* and *Hecate?* The verse of the "Litany to the Virgin," *stella matutina,*[1] we are informed, is a faithful copy of a verse from the litany of the *triformis* of the pagans. It is at the Council which condemned Nestorius that Mary was first

[1] The "Morning Star," or *Lucifer,* the name which Jesus calls himself by in Rev. xxii, 16, and which becomes, nevertheless, the *name of the Devil,* as soon as a theosophical journal assumes it!

titled as the "Mother of God," *mater dei.*

We may add a few more statements and give the etymology of the most sacred terms in ecclesiastical ritualism.

Let us give a few moments of attention to the assemblies of the "Builders of the upper Temple" in early Christianity. Ragon has shown plainly to us the origin of the following terms:

(*a*) The word "mass," comes from the Latin *Messis*—"harvest," whence the noun *Messias,* "he who ripens the harvest," Christ, the Sun.

(*b*) The word "Lodge" used by the Masons, the feeble successors of the Initiates, has its root in *loga,* (*loka,* in Sanskrit) a locality and a *world;* and in the Greek *logos,* the Word, a discourse; signifying in its full meaning "a place where certain things are discussed."

(*c*) These assemblies of the *logos* of the primitive *initiated* masons came to be called *synaxis,* "gatherings" of the Brethren for the purpose of praying and celebrating the *cœna* (supper) wherein only bloodless offerings, fruit and cereals, were used. Soon after these offerings began to be called *hostiæ* or sacred and pure *hosties,* in contrast to the impure sacrifices (as of prisoners of war, *hostes,* whence the word *hostage*). As the offerings consisted of the harvest fruits, the first fruits of *messis,* thence the word "mass." Since no father of the Church mentions, as some scholars would have it, that the word *mass* comes from the Hebrew *missah* (*oblatum,* offering) one explanation is as good as the other. For an exhaustive enquiry on the word *missa* and *mizda,* see King's *Gnostics,* pp. 124, *et seq.*

Now the word *synaxis* was also called by the Greeks *agyrmos* (a collection of men, assembly). It referred to initiation into the Mysteries. Both words—*synaxis* and *agyrmos*[2]—became obsolete with the Christians, and the word *missa,* or mass, prevailed and remained. Theologians will have it, desirous as they are to veil its etymology, that the term messias (*Messiah*) is derived from the Latin word *missus* (messenger, *the sent*). But if so, then again it may be applied as well to the Sun, the *annual messenger,* sent to bring light and new life to the earth and its products. The Hebrew word for Messiah *mâshiah* (anointed, from *mashah,* to annoint) will hardly apply to, or bear out the identity in the ecclesiastical sense; nor will the Latin

[2] Hesychius gives the name (agyrmos) to the first day of the initiation into the mysteries of Ceres, goddess of harvest, and refers to it also under that of *Synaxis.* The early Christians called their mass, before this term was adopted, and the celebration of their mysteries—*Synaxis,* a word compounded from *sun* "with," and *ago* "I lead," whence, the Greek synaxis or an *assembly.*

missa (mass) derive well from that other Latin word *mittere, missum,* "to send," or "dismiss." Because the communion service—its heart and soul—is based on the consecration and oblation of the host or *hostia* (sacrifice), a wafer (a thin, leaf-like bread) representing the body of Christ in the Eucharist, and that such wafer of flour is a direct development of the harvest or cereal offerings. Again, the primitive *masses* were *cœnas* (late dinners or suppers), which, from the simple meals of Romans, who "washed, were *anointed,* and wore a *cenatory* garment" at dinner, became consecrated meals in memory of the last Supper of Christ.

The converted Jews in the days of the Apostles met at their *synaxes,* to read the Evangels and their correspondence (Epistles). St. Justin (150 A.D.) tells us that these solemn assemblies were held on the day called *Sun* (Sunday, *dies magnus*), on which days there were psalms chanted, "collation of baptism with pure water and the *agapæ* of the holy *cœna* with bread and wine." What has this hybrid combination of pagan Roman dinners, raised by the inventors of church dogmas to a sacred mystery, to do with the Hebrew *Messiah* "he who causes to go down into the pit" (or Hades), or its Greek transliteration *Messias?* As shown by Nork, Jesus *"was never anointed either as high priest or king,"* therefore his name of *Messias* cannot be derived from its present Hebrew equivalent. The less so, since the word anointed, or "rubbed with oil" a Homeric term, is *chris,* and *chrio,* both *to anoint the body with oil.* (See *Lucifer* for 1887, "The Esoteric Meaning of the Gospels.")

Another high Mason, the author of "The Source of Measures," summarizes this *imbroglio* of the ages in a few lines by saying:

> The fact is there were *two Messiahs*: One, as causing himself to go down into the pit, for the salvation of the world;[3] this was the sun shorn of his *golden rays* and *crowned with blackened ones* (symbolizing this loss) as the thorns. *The other,* was the triumphant *Messiah,* mounted up to this *summit of the arch of Heaven,* personated as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah.* In both instances he had the cross. . . .

At the *Ambarvales,* the festivals in honour of Ceres, the *Arval* (the assistant of the High Priest) clad in pure white, placing on the *hostia* (sacrificial heap) a cake of corn, water and wine, tasted the

[3] From times immemorial every initiate before entering on his supreme trial of initiation, in antiquity as at the present time, pronounces these sacramental words. . . . "And I swear to give up my life for the salvation of my brothers, which constitute the whole mankind, if called upon, and to die in the defence of truth."

wine of *libation* and gave to all others to *taste*. The *oblation* (or offering) was then taken up by the High Priest. It symbolized the three kingdoms of Nature—the cake of corn (vegetable kingdom), the sacrificial vase or *chalice* (mineral), and the *pall* (the scarf-like garment) of the Hierophant, an end of which he threw over the oblation wine cup. This pall was made of pure white lamb-skins.

The modern priest repeats, gesture for gesture, the acts of the pagan priest. He lifts up and offers the bread to be consecrated; blesses the water that is to be put in the chalice, and then pours the wine into it, incenses the altar, etc., etc., and going to the altar washes his fingers saying, "I will wash my hands *among the* INNOCENT and encompass thy altar, O Lord." He does so, because the ancient and *pagan* priest did the same, saying, "I wash (with lustral water) my hands among the INNOCENT (the fully initiated Brethren) and encompass thy altar, O great Goddess" (Ceres). Thrice went the high priest round the altar loaded with offerings, carrying high above his head the chalice covered with the end of his snow-white lamb-skin.

The consecrated vestment worn by the Pope, the *pall, "has the form of a scarf made of white wool,* embroidered with purple crosses." In the Greek Church, the priest covers, with the end of the pall thrown over his shoulder, the chalice.

The High Priest of antiquity repeated thrice during the divine services his *"O redemptor mundi"* to Apollo "the Sun," his *mater Salvatoris,* to Ceres, the earth, his *Virgo paritura* to the Virgin Goddess, etc., and pronounced *seven ternary commemorations.* (Hearken, O Masons!)

The ternary number, so reverenced in antiquity, is as reverenced now, and is prounounced five times during the mass. We have three *introibo,* three *Kyrie eleison,* three *mea culpa,* three *agnus dei,* three *Dominus Vobiscum.* A true masonic series! Let us add to this the three *et cum spiritu tuo,* and the Christian mass yields to us the same *seven triple commemorations.*

PAGANISM, MASONRY, and THEOLOGY—such is the historical trinity now ruling the world *sub rosa.* Shall we close with a Masonic greeting and say:

Illustrious officers of Hiram Abif, Initiates, and "Widow's sons." The Kingdom of Darkness and ignorance is fast dispelling, but there are regions still untouched by the hand of the scholar, and as black as the night of Egypt. *Fratres, sobrii estote et vigilate!*

letters • questions • comment

In a group discussion of "What is the soul?" many illustrative statements were made. All were suggestive, none definitive. What is *the soul?*

The experience of the inquirer exemplifies one aspect of the human condition: though the mind is willing to search and is stimulated by the searching, the personal man longs for security, a place to rest, a definite answer. But few "what is?" questions admit of a definitive answer, for, as I. A. Richards says in *How to Read a Page,* " 'What is?' is a formula which can become a number of different questions rather than the simple direct question it seems to be." He continues:

> As we ask it from within different philosophies it has to have different answers. To the phenomenalist (or most modern psychologists) the answer will be sense-experiences; to the mechanist, particles in motion; to the idealist, spirits; to the Platonist, the Idea of the Good; to the Christian, God and his creation; to the Vedantist, the One. But these, though language very nearly forces us to think so, are not rival answers to one and the same question. The questions are different, though the formulation is the same.

When, as students of Theosophy, we seek to answer the question "What is the Soul?" we find ourselves in difficulty. We discover that there is no single "definitive" answer. If we turn to the Index of *The Secret Doctrine,* we find that "soul" itself must be limited, made specific, before it can be discussed; as, for example, animal soul, Nephesh or vital soul, Human Soul, Divine Soul, Universal Soul, intra-cosmic soul, etc. The soul, therefore, is something that can be talked about and can be identified as Man, Self, Monad, but cannot be defined, because it has no unchanging space-time relationship that makes it subservient to the requirements of ordinary language.

Possibly the nearest we can come to "defining" soul is to say that soul is a *name*—a name we give the metaphysical "point" at which

each aggregate is unified into a whole, the point from which it acts and responds as a unit, the point which "contains" all the powers of being and becoming that can be actualized by the aggregate it ensouls. The soul, then, may be regarded as a metaphysical "being" capable of many transformations—spiritually, intellectually, psychically. "In each and all of its changes, internal and external, it is ever the same *Soul*, but has designations to correspond." (THEOSOPHY 13:256.)

What is the soul? Each person must answer this question for himself, and should try to formulate his answer in as many different ways as he possibly can. Patanjali says: "The Soul is the Perceiver; is assuredly vision itself pure and simple; unmodified; and looks directly upon ideas. For the sake of the soul alone, the Universe exists." A comment, pertinent to our discussion, reads:

> In these words Patanjali, the most anciently known true Psychologist, describes the soul and the object of all existence or evolution. He makes no attempt to define the Soul, for each soul makes its own definitions or limitations, but his words at one stroke make clear the impassable gulf between Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, and all that passes among men for religion and science. . . . Soul is the creator, the preserver, the experiencer, the knower, in every form and in every state, visible or invisible, great or small, wise or foolish, good or evil. Soul is the evolver of all that was, is, or will be. Soul is capable of three forms of existence: pure Being, independent of mind or matter, as "vision itself, pure and simple, unmodified" by any subject or object, and this is the Spiritual *fact* of all souls; Self-existence, self-created and self-preserved meta-physical existence as mind or intelligence; dependent existence in forms created by other souls. The first is the fact of universal immortality, conscious or unconscious, vaguely implicit in all such ideas as a First Cause, as the conservation of energy, as the indestructibility of matter, and so on. It is *absolute* as distinct from *relative* being. The second is *consciously* mortal or immortal, dependent only on the ideas held by the soul itself; the third is the antithesis of the first, because purely relative and conditioned, as the other is absolute and unconditioned.
>
> Man, like every other soul, is immortal in Spirit, mortal in form, and may be either mortal or immortal in Intelligence or Mind, according as his ideas of Self are finite or infinite, universal or relative. *Conscious individual immortality* is the goal of all Evolution of Soul. (THEOSOPHY 16:372.)

Thus we see that *soul* cannot be defined, but only the forms of its expression. Yet, though undefinable in words, the Soul may be

realized. *The Voice of the Silence* points the way:

> Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions: mistrust they senses; they are false. But within thy body—the shrine of thy sensations—seek in the Impersonal for the "Eternal Man"; and having sought him out, look inward: thou art Buddha.

THINGS OF THE SPIRIT

I am not able to give you the definition which you ask for, as it seems to me, spirit cannot be defined except in this way, that the whole universe is made of spirit and matter, both constituting together the Absolute. What is not in matter is spirit, and what is not in spirit is matter; but there is no particle of matter without spirit, and no particle of spirit without matter. If this attempted definition is correct, you will see that it is impossible to define the things of the spirit, and that has always been said by the great teachers of the past.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

on the lookout

The Radical St. Francis

A curious occasion for reference to the doctrine of reincarnation is made by Prof. Lynn White, historian at the University of California in Los Angeles, in a paper which appears in *Science* for March 10. Prof. White is critically concerned with the Christian idea that all nature was created by the Deity for the service and convenience of man. He regards this as a selfish, anthropocentric doctrine and holds it responsible for the ruthless exploitation of nature characteristic of Western commercial enterprise. To find a basis for reform in Christian thinking, he turns to "the greatest radical in Christian history since Christ: Saint Francis of Assisi." Francis opposed the arrogance of man as king of creation and sought to establish a democracy of all creatures, proposing for humans "the virtue of humility—not merely for the individual but for man as a species." In his eyes, all living things had souls.

Cathar Heresy

It was to explain this spirit in St. Francis that Prof. White recalled the idea of reincarnation:

> What Sir Steven Runciman calls "the Franciscan doctrine of the animal soul" was quickly stamped out. Quite possibly it was in part inspired, consciously or unconsciously, by the belief in reincarnation held by the Cathar heretics who at that time teemed in Italy and southern France, and who presumably had got it originally from India. It is significant that at just the same moment, about 1200, traces of metempsychosis are found also in western Judaism, in the Provençal *Cabbala*. But Francis held neither to transmigration of souls nor to pantheism. His view of nature and of man rested on a unique sort of pan-psychism of all things animate and inanimate. . . .

Perhaps, in time, his historical studies will lead Prof. White to see greater promise for moral reform in a revival of the Cathar heresy of reincarnation than in the pan-psychism of Francis, which by comparison was only a sentiment of brotherhood. The dynamic conception of moral law on which reincarnation is based exerts a

far more persuasive influence. As William Q. Judge remarks in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "For if right ethics are to be practiced merely for themselves, men will not see why, and have never been able to see why, for that reason, they should do right."

Misconception of Karma

More extensive discussion of the idea of rebirth, together with that of Karma, appears in Melford E. Spiro's paper, "Buddhism and Economic Action in Burma," in a recent (No. 68, 1966) issue of the *American Anthropologist*. Mr. Spiro writes to correct misconceptions about the practical effects of belief in Karma and reincarnation among the Burmese. It is often claimed, he points out, that belief in Buddhist doctrines makes the Burmese "improvident," careless of the future, and indifferent to practical needs. His own field research in Burma convinced Mr. Spiro that these charges do not apply. The Burmese, he maintains, take a very practical view of their beliefs and govern their lives accordingly.

Life-Cycle of Rebirth

A long passage gives the setting of popular attitudes:

> The centrally operative feature of the Burmese behavioral environment is the belief in rebirth. This belief, which is derived from Buddhism, is held with almost unanimous conviction in every stratum of Burmese society. For the average Burman, rebirth, no less than birth, is an ineluctable fact of life and of nature. This means that the duration of "life" is not confined to the mere 60 or 70 years of this existence, but extends over an incalculable duration of tens of thousands of years. One's present existence is but a brief moment in a total life of inconceivably long duration, extending from a remote past to an equally remote future. Hence, except for the *arhat*—he who is immediately destined for nirvana—no sentient being can escape the inevitability of countless future rebirths. . . . how one is reborn is determined not by one's aspirations, but by one's karma, and rebirth as a wealthy man or in a heaven requires extraordinarily exceptional karma. Now karma is neither fate nor luck; it is, rather, the net balance of one's merits acquired in all of one's rebirths, including the present one. Merit, in turn, is acquired by three means: charity, morality, and meditation. As the Burmese view it, charity is especially efficacious for the acquisition of merit whose karmic consequence is rebirth as a wealthy human, morality for rebirth in heaven, and meditation for the attainment of nirvana, that is, for the cessation of rebirth.
>
> Since the attainment of nirvana is believed to be all but impossible for the typical human—and since, moreover, it is rarely

> desired, at least not in the immediate future—we can restrict our discussion to charity and morality. Of these two, charity looms large because moral lapses are, if only unwittingly, frequent, and the merit derived from charitable acts can, hopefully, compensate for the demerits of immoral deeds. Although charity in any form contributes to one's store of merit, religious charity—the building of pagodas, the maintenance of monasteries, the provision of monks, and so on—is charity *par excellence*.

It is Mr. Spiro's contention that the Burmese are by no means a "spiritual" people whose lives are dominated by other-worldly purposes, but that the beliefs they hold nonetheless give constructive shape to the patterns of their self-interest. Their charity, he points out, is from their point of view a "sound investment," especially in comparison to the risky prospects of economic ventures and savings which are so easily wiped out by revolutions, government confiscations, and other disasters with which the Burmese are historically quite familiar.

A "Higher" Pragmatism!

The following passage shows the regulative effect of belief in karma and reincarnation on what are sometimes called natural "human" tendencies:

> Desires for wealth, for luxury, for sensuous pleasures, for prestige . . . are not only not derived from Buddhism; they are anti-Buddhist. Indeed, for any Buddhist there can be only one genuine "Buddhist desire" (if I may be permitted this paradoxical expression), *viz.*, desire to escape from *samsara*, from the round of rebirths. The average Burman, at least the average Burmese villager, has no such desire; he desires, rather, to remain in the wheel of life and to experience pleasure, luxury, and enjoyment. Although as a normative system Buddhism teaches him to disdain such desires, as a cognitive system it tells him not only that these goals *can* be achieved, but also how they can be achieved. . . . In short, although the motivation for Buddhist consumption behavior is not determined by Buddhism (and is actually anti-Buddhist), Buddhism nevertheless determines this consumption pattern by providing a cognitive structure within which this action set is perceived to be more efficacious for the satisfaction of material desires than any alternative action set.

Hope and Effort

It should be noted, on the one hand, that Mr. Spiro is practicing the science of cultural anthropology, not interesting himself in

philosophical criticism or inquiry; and on the other, that Burmese Buddhism is a secularized cultural expression of the original Buddhist inspiration, in which what were originally profound philosophical conceptions have been put on a calculatingly pragmatic basis. Yet the effect of the beliefs, even at this low level, is impressively good. Mr. Spiro says at the end of his paper:

> We may conclude, finally, that *the notion that karma is an essentially negative-motivational variable is a misleading half-truth.* The belief in karma may indeed induce an attitude of resignation to the frustrating conditions of one's present existence, even when this belief is qualified, as it is in Burma, by the belief in the importance of wisdom and effort as co-determinants of one's life chances. For the Burman, however, the present existence is but a moment in a total "life" of inconceivably long duration. Although his belief in karma might resign him to his present poverty and suffering, the Burman nevertheless aspires to a future of riches and happiness. It is his belief in karma, and in the efficacy of merit as a means for improving his karma, that provides him with the expectation of altering, even dramatically altering, his future life-chances. On the assumption, then, that one's present existence is but a temporary way-station in one's total life, it would seem quite obvious that hope, planning, and effort—not resignation, indifference, and quiescence—are the conditions to which the belief in karma are conducive.

A More Inspiring View

This paper by Mr. Spiro is a carefully prepared and useful report, offering evidence which contradicts the hackneyed claims concerning the "passive East" and refutes charges made against Buddhism by religious prejudice. Yet the reader may find it valuable to consult a much earlier work, Fielding Hall's *The Soul of a People,* in which the author, who lived in Burma for years, looks beneath the external life of the people and gains a more inspiring and heart-warming understanding of Burmese Buddhism. In the light of Fielding Hall's experience, Mr. Spiro's work becomes a limited and even distorted view.

Ancient Civilization in Mexico

A report in *Science* (March 17) summarizes what is now known and conjectured about the Olmec civilization. Between 1939 and 1946, W. M. Sterling uncovered three sites in the environs of San Lorenzo, Veracruz; further work in 1955 and 1966 "brought to light a large number of fine Olmec sculptures, including the largest colos-

sal heads yet discovered—enormous, free-standing, basalt sculptures believed to be portraits of Olmec lords." The sculptures, being of stone, could not be dated, but the pottery and artifacts found with them could.

The Olmec civilization is said to have been at its height in and near San Lorenzo around 1200-900 B.C., from then on, declining—as the report sketches:

> We now speculate (1) that there was a transfer of some monuments (the rest being ceremonially abandoned) and presumably leaders to La Venta, which at about 800 B.C. became the new Olmec supreme center; (2) that there was a simultaneous movement of Olmec groups to the Mexican highlands, particularly to Pueblo and Morelos, and across to the Pacific coast of southeastern Mesoamerica; (3) that La Venta was in turn destroyed or abandoned after 400 B.C.; and (4) that in the Late Formative period [300 B.C. to A.D. 150] there was the final flicker of a civilization which could now barely be called Olmec at the site of Tres Zapotes.

Old Atlanteans?

"The lack of antecedents is an embarrassing problem," say the writers, adding—

> Whoever the Olmecs were, these pioneers must have been unusually gifted in engineering as well as art, for it has now been shown that the basalt from which these great monoliths were fashioned came from the slopes of the Cerro Cintepec in the Tuxtla Mountains, far to the northwest of San Lorenzo Tenochtitlan. They must have been floated on rafts down to the Gulf of Mexico and along the coast to the mouth of the Rio Coatzacoalcos, and dragged from the river up to the San Lorenzo plateau with ropes.

In a footnote on page 276 of *The Secret Doctrine* II, H.P.B. quotes from Donnelly's *Atlantis*: "A great deal of the Central American history is taken up with the doings of an ancient race of giants called Quinanes." The size of the sculptures, the preference for basalt (a lava formation), and the ingenuity and skills of the Olmecs, would all seem to suggest an Atlantean origin. For "there *were* giants in those days," and (II, 182) "some of the descendants of the primitive Nagas, the Serpents of Wisdom, peopled America, when its continent arose during the palmy days of the great Atlantis. . . . Otherwise, whence the traditions and legends . . . and even the identity in the names of certain 'medicine men' and priests, who exist to this day in Mexico?"

Other Ancient Cultures in Mexico

Diggings pursued in central Mexico near Valsequillo, have turned up man-made tools close to the remains of long-extinct animals (Los Angeles *Times,* May 9). Volcanic ash found lying over three of the sites where tools were unearthed gave two dates when analyzed: 19,600 years and plus 40,000 years. The archeologists involved think the older date correct: the shells at the lowest level are at least 35,000 years old, and the highest deposits are about 9,000 years old. The *Times* sums up:

> According to Mrs. Irwin-Williams [a Harvard archeologist], the stone tools from the earliest sites are very primitive and unlike any other known New World artifacts. However they do include well-defined projectile points (for throwing), hide scrapers and other leather-making tools.
>
> According to C. E. Ray (of the Smithsonian Institution), the animals these ancient people hunted in central Mexico included such ice-age giants as mammoths and mastodons, as well as camels and horses of kinds long extinct.

The futility of dogmatizing about the ancestry of these very ancient peoples throughout central America may be seen by comparing the *S.D.* reference (II, 182) and this from *Isis* (I, 555):

> We feel every day as certain that some of the peoples of Central America will be traced back to the Phoenicians and the Mosaic Israelites, as we do that the latter will be proved to have as persistently stuck to the same idolatry—if idolatry there is—of the sun and serpent worship, as the Mexicans.

Mechanistic Psychology Outmoded

In the *Journal of Parapsychology* for March, Sir Cyril Burt discusses "The Implications of Parapsychology for General Psychology." His conclusions are far-reaching, and devastating. He holds, on evidence submitted, that the phenomena of ESP are now so well established by experimental demonstrations that no honest scientist can justify ignoring their probable reality. He proposes, further, that the assumptions of mechanistic psychology are borrowed from Newtonian physics, which, for all its usefulness in engineering and other branches of applied science, has been replaced in many branches of research by physical theory resting on Einsteinian foundations. Brain specialists, he points out, find it necessary to resort to quantum theory to give an account of the transmission of nervous impulses, and the foremost neurologist of the day, Sir John Eccles,

"regards the brain not as a generator of mind or consciousness, but rather as a detector of extraneous influences, such as those we commonly refer to as mind or will."

The Paranormal Foundation

Sir Cyril is convinced that it is a mistake to try to understand extrasensory perception by analogy with ordinary sense perception. In sight, for example, he believes that *all* perception—even the most ordinary—is basically clairvoyant, with the apparatus of physical sight limiting or qualifying what is seen. This view seems supported by various recent researches into the physiology and psychology of perception. Accordingly, Sir Cyril concludes:

> The material brain, with its accessory mechanisms of sense organs and sensory nerves, has been evolved, not to generate consciousness—a feat which no mere physico-chemical structure could possibly accomplish—but rather to transmit, and at the same time limit and direct, the mind's unique powers of clairvoyance so that, under ordinary mundane conditions, they are selectively concentrated on the objects or situations—or those aspects of them—which are of vital importance for the survival of the physical organism and of the species to which it belongs. When for the time being these practical requirements are ensured, then the wider range of our clairvoyant powers becomes manifest, as for example in the deeper insight of the poet, the artist, or the mystic who sees "the earth and every common object . . . apparelled in celestial light," "glowing with an intrinsic meaning and a glamour of their own."

"Not the Whole Truth"

It is of interest to correlate this theory of normal vision with the explanation of clairvoyant sight in relation to physical sight given on page 142 of *The Ocean of Theosophy*. Sir Cyril ends his argument by saying:

> The main implication of parapsychology can . . . be condensed into a syllogism. "ESP," we are told, "is a phenomenon which ought not to occur if the physicalist's assumptions are sound and if behaviorism is the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But ESP does occur. Therefore behaviorism is not the whole truth, and the physicalist's *Weltbild* collapses.

Africa, Old and New

Muntu, a recent book on African culture and philosophy by Janheinz Jahn (Grove Press), is filled with disclosures of African belief reminiscent of ancient philosophical principles. Prof. Jahn

writes with great sympathy and understanding, hoping to generate in his readers a fundamental respect for African tradition and to win interest in what he calls "the new African culture," now being brought into being by African writers and artists who use some of the forms of Western civilization while preserving the spirit of their ancestral heritage.

In passing, Prof. Jahn frees the practice of *Voodoo* in Haiti of much of the pseudo-romantic and salacious associations given it by Western writers. The author's point of view is early stated:

> The Africa presented by the ethnologist is a legend in which we used to believe. The African tradition as it appears in the light of neo-African culture may also be a legend—but it is the legend in which African intelligence believes. And it is their perfect right to declare authentic and correct and true those components of their past which they believe to be so. In the same way a Christian, asked about the nature of Christianity, will point to the Gospel teaching "Love thy neighbor" and not to the Inquisition.

High Deity

There is a sense in which polytheistic African religion is far more impersonal than Western faiths. Even with the overlay of Christian forms and words as developed in Haiti, the original spirit is somewhat preserved:

> Bon Dieu is only in name the Christian "Good Lord" who is close to men and concerns Himself about the destiny of individuals. Like the African highest divinities, such as *Olorun, Amma* or *Nyamurunga,* he is infinitely distant from the world and unapproachable, while the Christian saints become deified ancestors, loas or orishas. Voodoo is not christianized through these identifications, but Christianity is voodooized, assimilated to the residual-African religion. The identification of loas and saints has transformed the saints into forces.

Further:

> In Cuba, as in Yorubaland, Bon Dieu is called *Olorun.* But since the absolute transcends all human understanding, no temples are built to Olorun either in Yorubaland or in Cuba, and no sacrifices made to him. On the other hand, the life force of the creator is thought to be present in all creatures and in all things, especially in the orisha, who in Yorubaland were originally human beings, important ancestors from whom the Yoruba people are descended. Their extensive spiritual and physical progeny demonstrates that they are forces, life forces, which share, just as you and I do, the primal life force.

No Miracles Sought

As with practically all "primitive" peoples, prayer is invocation —a form of magic—and no prayers are addressed to the highest deities:

> NTU is the universe of forces; it is not fitted to be the object of worship. And neither can the mythological representative of this universe, "God" and Nya-Murunga, "the great begetter," *Olorun, Amma, Vidye, Immana, Bon Dieu* or whatever the representative of the world order happens to be called, be brought into a personal relationship with man. Complaints and wishes are not directed to the world order itself; a woman who pleads to have a child does not want any change in the fundamental laws of the cosmos. With one's personal cares and wishes one turns to the ancestors. . . .

On "Intelligence"

In African thought a great distinction is made between man and animal. "The animal hears and reacts, but man hears and understands." The word for intelligence is *ubwenge*:

> Ubwenge as human, active intelligence has two levels, depending upon whether it is a question of a "practical" or a "habitual" intelligence. Practical intelligence is nothing more than slyness, cunning, intellectual grasp or cleverness. Habitual intelligence, on the other hand, means active knowledge, ability, understanding, wisdom. Recently, however, this habitual intelligence or wisdom has again been subdivided. "Since we have come into contact with European culture," writes Kagame, "the fact of studying has suggested a conception formerly unknown, from which has arisen another ubwenge. Ask about a child: 'Does that child have intelligence?' And hear the reply: 'He has the intelligence.' The person answering means by this that although the child understands readily what he learns in school, he is wanting in the wisdom of life, in the knowledge of relationships, of situations in life in which he is placed by the play of actual circumstance. In other words: the child has a lively intelligence, but no wisdom; he cannot apply his theoretical knowledge to the practical situations of life."
>
> Kagame reports that an old Ruandese woman who cannot read and write will say with the most complete conviction: " 'White men are really disarmingly naïve! They have no intelligence.' Dare to reply: 'How can you say something so stupid? Have you been able, like them, to invent so many marvels that exceed our imagination?' and she will reply with a pitying smile: 'Listen, my child, They have learned all that, but they have no intelligence! They understand nothing!' "

Nommo—the Word

The old woman is talking about feeling, about magical relationships with nature and the forces of the world. A similar view appears in the inability of Africans to "thank God" for the fruit of the land and the multiplication of livestock. "So they would not allow that these and such like things did come from God but were brought from the earth and from the water and were gained by their labor."

Men accomplish all they do through the power of the Word—*Nommo*. "A creature which is sharply distinguished from the animal and has its place in the community of men is produced, not by the act of birth, but by the word-seed: it is designated." Thus the ear is a sex organ, since it receives the "fruitful seed of the word." The wizard is an evil-doer "who twists the meaning of the Nommo into its opposite, purposely disturbs the harmony and frame of the world order, and if he is known and unmasked, is sure of the most terrible punishment." He is put to death in a way that dissolves his inner existence "and can no longer exercise any sort of Nommo in the universe of forces." This, Prof. Jahn explains, is "the most terrible metaphysical punishment, the only possible annihilation, the only real death, since normal death represents only the transition to another form of existence." There is this interesting comment:

> It was only through the disruption of the traditional order that the practices of the wizard lost their terror and, where foreign rule drove the masses to despair, became the only remaining means of resisting a lawless oppression in an equally lawless fashion. Thus wizardry or illegal witchcraft became the source for the power of the Mau-Mau.

There is much in this book on African art and poetry, and a long chapter on the general philosophical principles of African tradition, compiled from the basically similar teachings among five different peoples. *Muntu* is a book that should contribute to both international and interracial understanding.

Growing Respect for Ancient Science

A Swiss psychiatrist, called to India to lecture at the University of Lucknow on psychotherapy, found himself astonished and impressed by the scope of Ayurvedic medicine, the healing art of ancient India, of which the chief treatises are now being published in multilingual form. Dr. Medard Boss, professor of psychotherapy at

the University of Zurich, says in his recently published book, *A Psychiatrist Discovers India* (London: Wolff, 1965):

> What most surprised me in these writings was the astonishing number of references to corporeal-mental interrelationships, which we modern psychiatrists are now having great difficulty in working out. To single out but one example, in the case of jaundice and other gall ailments, ill-humour is assigned exactly the same pathogenic importance as the organic causes. And the psychical and the physical are put on the same footing, without further comment, as if this were the most self-evident thing in the world. However, it only demonstrates how completely Indian thinking could keep free of artificial segmentation of the human being into a corporeal body and an other-natured, radically distinct, mental-spiritual sphere. It is this dichotomy that is giving Western medical men such trouble in their attempts to arrive at an adequate conception of illness.

Study of Acupuncture

A Central Drug Research Institute has been established at Lucknow "to investigate the effectiveness of ancient Ayurvedic drug mixtures," and there are thirty other such scientific institutes, scattered over India, making similar studies. Meanwhile, in China, the same spirit of respect for the ancients prevails. Chinese medicine under Communism, as the distinguished Canadian neurological surgeon, Wilder Penfield, has pointed out, is studying the benefits of the ancient practice of acupuncture, with specialists in this art practicing in Chinese hospitals. Acupuncture is now becoming popular in England, and according to *Science* for April 7, the University of California Press in Berkeley has recently brought out a second edition of *Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wen* (*The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*), a volume largely made up of traditional Chinese medical literature. The book propounds basic ideas about physiology, pathology, and therapeutics which have shaped Chinese medical thought down to the present time.

The reviewer in *Science* finds it a "sad commentary on modern Western scholarship [that] in the seventeen years since this book's original appearance there has been no serious book-length study in Chinese medical history."

The Chinese system of therapy is founded on philosophy—"the interaction of that cosmological duality the *yin-yang*, the functioning of the five elements, and the circulation of *ch'i* (pneuma) within

the human body." The reviewer is not advocating the practice of acupuncture, but simply noting:

> The real regret must be not just that the bulk of the *Nei Ching* remains untranslated and its text not yet subjected to thorough philological analysis, but that the entire field of Chinese medicine has been so neglected.

A.F.S.C. Commended

An editorial in the *Christian Century* (April 26) extends "congratulations, gratitude and best wishes to the American Friends Service Committee as it celebrates its 50th anniversary on April 30, 1967." The list of humanitarian activities it has engaged in is impressive, as shown by the *Century*:

> Founded by members of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in 1917 to provide an alternative to military service during World War I, the A.F.S.C. immediately began that program of relief, healing, rehabilitation and education that has distinguished it for the past half-century: relief to war victims in devastated France, child feeding programs in Germany and Austria, an antityphus campaign in Poland, famine relief in Russia, aid to civilians on both sides of the Spanish civil war and the Chinese civil war. After thirty years of such humanitarian service the A.F.S.C. and its counterpart, the Friends Service Council, received the Nobel peace prize in 1947, the only American organization to be so honored. In the 1960s the A.F.S.C. has been engaged in fair-housing programs in seven states, rehabilitation programs for resettled refugees in Algeria, a food and medical supply airlift to Cuba after the hurricane disaster, pilot community development programs in Peru and Zambia, India, and programs of relief and rehabilitation planning for South Vietnam.

"This, in rough sketch," the editorial continues, "has been the story of the A.F.S.C.—a sane, unrelenting, indiscriminate expression of all that is finest in the human spirit."